Taxes on Luxury Consumption

1149. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission has suggested heavy taxes on luxury consumption and strong discouragement of diversion of productive resources to the luxury sector for raising the savings rate during the Eighth Five Year Plan; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regrad?

THE MINISTER OF PLANNING AND THE MINISTER OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) No, Sir. Exercises relating to estimation of resources for the Eighth Five Year Plan have recently started and no conclusions have yet been reached.

(b) Does not arise.

Harmful Effects of Food Irradiation

1150. DR. G. VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that irradiation of foods leads to formation or organic, free redicals which reacts with molecular oxygen to produce radiolytic products such as epoxides, which after ingestion may react with cellular INA to cause mutaland cancer;

(b) whether in view of the mass of data available abroad, Government propose to review food irradiation policies and programme; and

(c) whether any indepth studies have been undertaken in this country on the subject and if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) There is no evidence to show that ingestion of irradiated food causes mutation or cancer.

(b) While giving clearance for the adoption of irradiation for preservation of food articles, Government have carefully scrutinised all available data on the wholesomeness and safety aspects of irradiated foods.

(c) Indepth studies on radiation doses, wholesomeness and biological safety of irradiation foods, have been carried out. Evidence obtained from studies, using multigeneration trials and tests for mutogenisity, reproductive efficiency and other health parameters, on irradiated and composite diets, have shown the biological safety of irradiated foods.

Food Irradiation

1151. DR. G. VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that food irradiation causes partial or complete destruction or chemical modification of essential vitamins and minerals and if so, whether Government propose to review irradiation of goods both for exports and also for use in the country; and

(b) whether any indepth studies on the subject have been conducted in this country and abroad and if so; full details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) Studies conducted in India and other countries have shown that at doses used for radiation preservation of foods i.e. upto 10 kgs., there are no changes in the mineral content. The alterations in vitamin contents